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"About me you'll be glad to learn
I've ceased to be a 'drunken sot,'
And stir *besides* my own broth-pot."

SEE PAGE 70.

JOHN TODD AND HOW HE STIRRED HIS



LONDON
65 HOULSTON AND WRIGHT
PATERNOSTER ROW

JOHN TODD

AND

HOW HE STIRRED HIS OWN BROTH-POT.

A TALE WORTH TELLING.

BY

REV. JOHN ALLAN,

Author of "The Lentiad," &c.

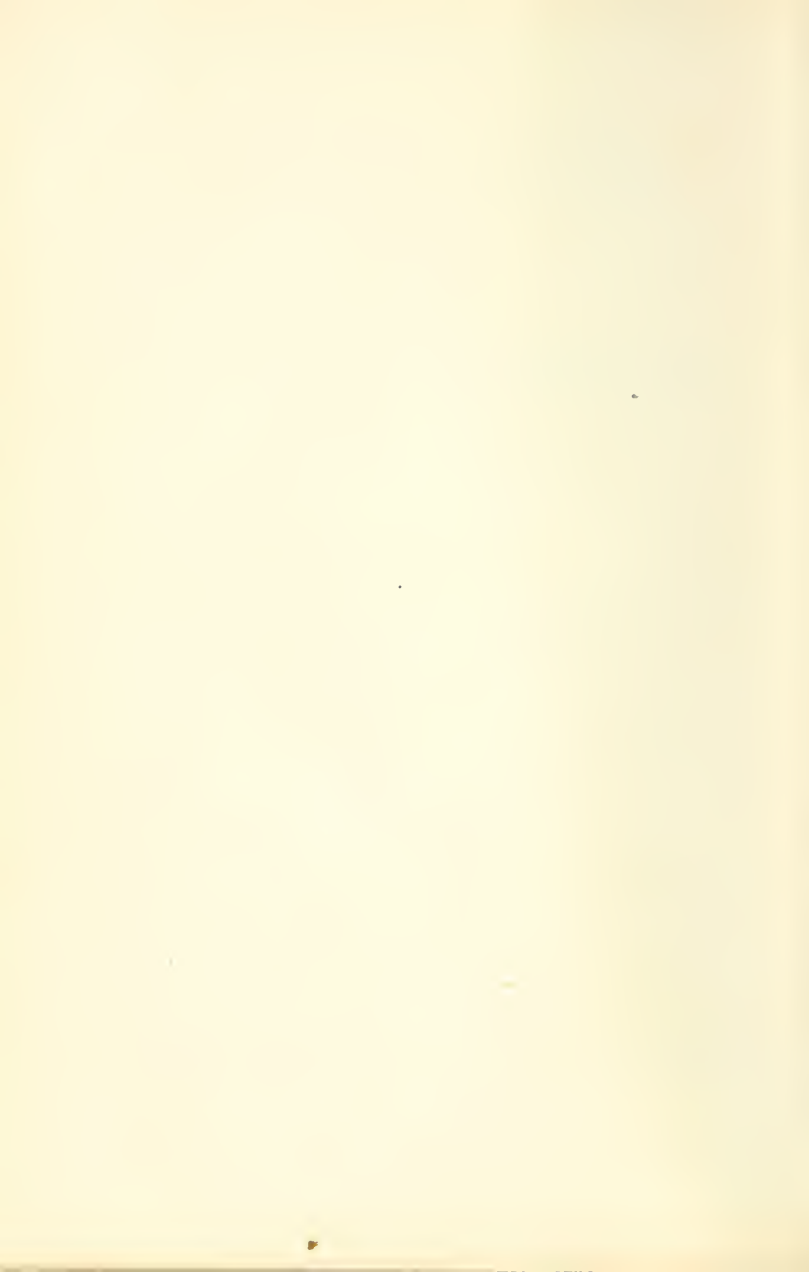
"The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands."

LONGFELLOW.

LONDON:

HOULSTON & WRIGHT, 65, PATERNOSTER ROW.

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AN APOLOGY.

SOME critics say that in no case
A book should be without preface,
As always something, less or more,
Which bears the name should go before.
Not even a pamphlet or *libellus*
Should be without one, as they tell us.
But if an author hath not got
Wherewith to make one, then why not?
Why should he, if so pinched or placed,
Not let his book go unprefaced?

When thus nonplussed, to take the pains
Of cudgelling his barren brains,
In hope of beating out what may
Pass for a preface in its way,
But which would not the public make
The wiser, were a grand mistake.
And lest I should fall into it,
All prefacing I must omit;

So that my readers may at once,
Without such preface-hinderance,
Begin to read what I have wrote
About JOHN TODD and his BROTH-POT.

With' all the greater ease I may
Pursue this course, for I can say
That if they'll read on to the end,
'Tis more than sure they'll comprehend
All that is said about JOHN's case,
Without the help of note or preface ;
For everything they'll find to be
About as plain as A, B, C.
But still if there be those who need
A preface, to induce to read,
(Howe'er I differ from their views,
And care not for such P's and Q's),
Then let them just conceive that what
Thus goes before will do for that ;
Whilst should the printer, and the man
Who'll sell my book insist on one,
They'll find that what I here have said,
Will serve their end—that is, their trade ;
For trade of course is their look out,
Whate'er an author writes about.

But that which serves them in this view,
May to myself bring profit too ;
For should this prefix to my tale
Be found a means to help its sale,
The more, of course, since I have made it,
Should be in cash put to my credit ;
And I would rather for my story,
Be paid in pence than puffs of glory :
For though no glutton, I don't find
That I can live on puffs of wind.

Now, though I would not like to raise ,
A trumpet-blast to sound my praise,
As no great author should bespatter
Himself with gasconading matter ;
Yet I may say, what true and safe is,
This is, withal, a first-rate preface :
For it does not say aught about
What in the tale folks will find out,
And they'll enjoy it all the more
That nothing such is placed before :
Though as the story's very nice,
One could afford to tell it twice—
First in the preface style, and next
In what goes by the name of text.

Since all this bother is for those
Who like a preface, I suppose
I may conclude, without a puff,
That this for one is good enough.
And having just as little doubt,
I should not spin it longer out,
I'll stop to let the readers face
The tale, or plunge "*in medias res*;"
Which simply means, in the translation,
That they'll go plump to the narration,
And thus they'll learn what can be got
From MR. TODD and his BROTH-POT.
If with him they don't "raise a ruck,"
They're sure to get what's called "pot-luck,"
And this, with welcome, is at least
As good as what is called a feast.



JOHN TODD

AND

HIS OWN BROTH-POT.

I.

TODD'S TENDENCIES, AND HOW HE TREATED THEM.

JOHN TODD, like other tippling men,
Went toddling, every now and then,
To places where the drunkard bouses,
Called taverns, inns, or public-houses;
And there, with comrades like himself,
He wasted much of hard-earned pelf;
And, what was worse than wasting wealth,
He wasted morals, time, and health.
By handicraft he made his bread,
For he was blacksmith to his trade;
And having, from but moderate gain,
A wife and children to maintain,
His low, degrading, tippling course,
Became from this so much the worse;

For thus the kin who most deserved
His kindest treatment, nigh were starved,
And made to feel, day after day,
The ills of pinching poverty.

Nor could he plead the lame excuse,
For visiting the public-house,
That he could not for comfort look,
At his own home, or ingle-nook ;
For in his wife there was a prize
That might have blessed a man more wise.
But fuddling JOHN did not inherit
Enough of sense to prize her merit ;
And yet, whilst by him harshly used,
He was not in his turn abused,
For 'twas by kindness that she tried
To get his errors rectified.

As she did not the saying doubt,
That " Wine when *in* puts wisdom *out*,"
She held that, in his drunken fits,
The sot had sent away his wits ;
And hence resolved, she would not then
Attempt to argue or explain
What were the evils of his life,
And how they tried his hapless wife.

Instead of this she waited on,
Till sleep had sobered drunken JOHN ;
For then she hoped that, by appealing
To any sense he had of feeling,
She might affect his callous heart,
And make him act a wiser part.

Hence, when from drink he staggered in,
She did not with her tongue begin
To beat, and bang, and bruise, and batter,
By pouring out a world of chatter ;
But wisely tried a smoother course,
To hinder matters getting worse.
She well perceived that if she got,
As well as JOHN, both fierce and hot,
She might thereby increase the storm,
And leave him still without reform.
Whence, that she might attain her end,
And therefore get JOHN TODD to mend,
She wished, in proper time and season,
To try the use of sober reason,
In hope that by such means she would,
In Providence, get him subdued.

It happened well she was so wise,
For, had she acted by advice,

And therefore taken some counsels tendered,
Home scenes had worse and worse been rendered.
Her neighbours of the female gender,
Supposed they could assistance render,
In bringing JOHN to leave the sin
He was so much indulging in ;
And in her place, each one was sure,
It was a case that she could cure.

Some in their wisdom sagely said,
That Mrs. TODD should shake her head,
And screw her mouth, and, looking bold,
Begin to rage, and stamp, and scold,
And heap on JOHN profound abuse,
When he came drunk into the house.
One said that, were she in her place,
She'd dash the dishclout in his face,
The moment that the tippling brute
Within the threshold set his foot.

Another thought the better plan,
In dealing with a drunk Goodman,
Would be to shave his ugly pate,
When he was in a fuddled state.
Another still, and quite as wise,
Said she would Mrs. TODD advise,

To souse him well with pails of water,
When he set up his drunken chatter ;
And at him keep with such nice cooling,
Till he got wisdom by the schooling.

By such prescriptions, friend on friend,
Conceived that she JOHN TODD could mend ;
So that she would, were she JOHN's wife,
Soon make him lead another life.
The vixen-plan was that alone,
Which they supposed would brush up JOHN :
But Mrs. TODD would not consent
To take the counsels which they lent ;
For it was all by gentle dealing,
She meant to try her hand at healing.
She better knew, than others could,
At where in JOHN the mercury stood ;
And for that reason she could tell
That, if she went to work pell-mell,
And tried on him her dishclout pith,
She ne'er would mend the drunken smith.
By dishclout war, she felt assured,
There was no chance he would be cured.

From this, howe'er, we don't conclude,
That dishclout-fights can ne'er do good ;

For well we know there are some men
Who need such clouting now and then ;
As they can ne'er be tauglit, or reached,
By any other thing that's preached.
And what can wives do with such vermin,
Except they give a dishclout sermon ?
If they don't deal out dishclout blows,
They needs must pull them by the nose ;
For they can't pull them by the mind,
As *that* is what they cannot find :
Their mind is gone, and " gone to pot,"
If it be what they e'er had got.

What then can wives, we ask again,
Do with such soulless, drinking men ?
What they should do is hard to tell,
But dishclouts, whiles, might serve them well ;
For when to reason men are dead,
A dishclout should be at their head,
And there applied with all the pith,
Their hapless wives are furnished with.
In certain cases, that's the least
Which suits " the nature of the beast ;"
And where it is so, then we say,
Apply with pith the remedy,

And let the fellows feel at once,
The power of dishclout eloquence.
With dirty water fill the clout,
Then make it swing and whirl about,
Until the culprits cry from pain,
They'll never do the like again ;
No—never drink another drop,
In any stinking spirit shop.

This plan, howe'er, was not the best
For Mrs. TODD, as she had guessed ;
And therefore, keeping free from rant,
Or playing off the termagant,
She wisely tried each soothing plan,
To make her spouse a better man.
But though so gentle in her way,
The fellow still, from day to day,
Maintained himself in the abuse,
Which brought such misery to his house,
And e'en abused his very wits
To justify his drinking fits.

'Twas special thirst which made him take
What things, he said, *that* thirst might slake ;
And as he knew his thirst was got,
From sparks of iron that burned his throat,

He never had the smallest doubt,
That sparks like these were best put out
By something of a stronger smell,
Than what came from a pump or well.
To some this might appear a whim,
But it was something more to him ;
And not a thing but vaguely guessed,
For he had put it to the test.

By nature he did not incline,
To stronger drink than Adam's wine ;
And though at last his taste was bred
To sterner stuff, 'twas from his trade ;
For, as he argued with his wife,
It was his salamander-life,
Or living so much in the fire,
Which made him such a taste acquire
As led him on to stronger matter
For quenching thirst, than good spring-water.
The sin was less upon his head,
As he supposed, than on his trade ;
And that he might confirm this view,
He swore oft with an oath or two,
That had he never been a smith,
Perchance, he ne'er had meddled with

Those drinks which, doubtless for his pains,
Wrought mischief sometimes in his brains,
And made him less than he should be,
Before his wife and family.

That men might more his learning prize,
He thought he should philosophise ;
And then he showed that natural laws,
Explained the reason or the cause,
Why liquors that are alcoholic,
Are fitted for a cold or colic ;
And how it is that they supply
Fit moisture for a throat that's dry.

He proved that red-hot iron's matter
Which ill agrees with frigid water ;
And as to iron in that state
He might himself assimilate,
'Twas clear enough he might get harm,
Did he take drink which was not warm,
There being reason to suspect,
That perspiration quickly check'd
Might in some way affect his breath,
Or what was worse, bring on his death.
He firmly held with all physicians,
That sudden changes or transitions,

But specially from heat to cold,
On health and comfort always told ;
And therefore people tried, when wise,
Their temperature to equalise,
Which was the thing he took to first,
When he required to quench his thirst.

He proved, besides, that water-springs
Had sometimes in them certain things,
Which showed that they should not be tried
For drink, till they were qualified ;
And so, lest he in drinking waters,
Should drink some deleterious matters,
He thought it safer to resort,
To liquids of a different sort,
As by this means, in his belief,
He might prevent no small mischief ;
And more of merit, he was sure,
Lay in prevention than in cure.

Then as for those intestine rubs
Called colics, or the mulligrubs,
He could, in face of anybody,
Maintain they could be killed by toddy ;
Though if there were not time to boil
The water, then, to save the toil,

The water having little pith,
Could be quite well dispensed with ;
For oft he found good spirits suited
His colics, though quite undiluted :
And he was sure his colics wrought,
Like other people's, as they ought.

But other states he still could name,
Which had on bottled things a claim.
“Exhaustion,” said he, “often wants
The strongest kind of stimulants,
So as to quicken, or revive,
And keep a weary man alive.
When men have gone beyond the pith
That they have been provided with,
Or wrought their strength down to the stump
To say that then a water-pump
Can yield the liquid that is best
For them to use, must be a jest ;
If it was not, as he might say,
Like mocking one's infirmity.
Pumps were not bad things in their place,
But did not suit the stated case ;
They had their mission without doubt,
And one sometimes could pump it out :

But for exhaustion, he was sure,
They could not bring the proper cure.
As for himself when overwrought,
They were not things he ever sought,
For what he drew from casks or kegs,
Far sooner set him on his legs.

When bodily strength was in prostration,
As chanced to tradesmen in his station,
It was to him as clear as brass,
That there was nothing like a glass
Of something that was strong and pithy,
To make a man fit for the smithy.
'Twas more than marvels he could do,
With but a thimbleful or two ;
For that first set his blood a-glowing,
And then there was such bellows-blowing,
As oft made people stand and wonder,
If they heard not the war of thunder ;
Whilst next his arm, thus nerved with strength,
Gave strokes of such a swinging length,
That he could without any trouble
Mere dramless jobs far more than double."

II.

TODD'S TENDENCIES, AND HOW THEY TREATED HIM.

By reasoning thus, JOHN let folks see
How he could spin a theory ;
And how he had surpassed his betters
Had he been made a man of letters.
A DARWIN and a BUCKLE, then,
Had been but stupid-looking men,
And would, no doubt, have made a god,
Not of themselves, but Mr. TODD ;
Who must have been, in such a case,
The fittest for so high a place.

He could have proved, one scarce need doubt,
That man, when he was first brought out,
And destined to be primal dad,
Was nothing more than a monad,
Or mote, which moisture, heat, and light,
Developed to a zoophyte ;
And of the lowest type, of course,
Till, by the power of plastic force,

(That wise designing thing in nature
Which some prefer 'bove their Creator),
He mounted to the highest grade,
Through better knowledge of the trade.
Still "struggling" upward in his way,
And making progress every day,
He went through each ascending shape,
Till made a monkey, or an ape ;
When rubbing off the monkey tail,
As what he safely could assail,
And trying matters still to mend
By rising on his farther end,
He reached at last, in his condition,
His present standing-up position.

That he might leave still more behind
The beasts, he "struggled" next for mind ;
And therewith to give up the squeak,
Or growls of beasts, that he might speak :
Whilst *now* he "struggles" hard to show
This funny way he chanced to grow ;
And that he did not come from Adam,
And Eve—the first old Bible madam,
For they were not orang-outangs,
But myths—as said by some savans,

Who see by virtue of their lore
Through millstones, and a great deal more.

Now it is clear had Mr. Todd
Got monkey-learning *à la mode*,
He might have said, and proved it too,
That man from *beasthood* really grew ;
And thus have saved a lot of pains
To others who have monkey-brains.
When theories by him were spun
He never left a case half done,
But ended always in his showing
In what way they wer~~e~~ set a-going.
Bare speculation seemed to him,
A kind of mental toy or whim ;
And therefore he could never prize
A thing he could not utilise.
Whence, if with drinks that were fermented,
He now and then experimented,
It was to prove their adaptation,
For modifying perspiration,
And warding off the special harm,
Which smiths incurred when they were warm.

But John had thirst right ill to slake,
And this made him ofttimes to take

More of the drink that's alcoholic,
Than needed for a cold or colic ;
Or yet than needed in relation
To great or extra perspiration.
Then this, in turn, as surely brought
JOHN TODD to extra want of thought ;
That is to say—this bottle elf
Made Mr. TODD forget himself :
For when it seized, or took his head,
It always dreadful havoc made,
And took delight—it was so scurvy—
In turning all things topsyturvy ;
So that the smith was often beat
To use aright his legs and feet.

Then, further to increase his trouble,
All single things he thought were double ;
For what was one was, in his view,
Not simply one, but really two ;
And by this rule two looked like four,
Whilst five became just half a score ;
And then he had as little doubt,
That all of them ran round about.

When drink in this way mock'd his sight,
He saw what clearly was not right ;

For then he saw in his abode
A sort of double Mrs. TODD—
A thing, he said, he could not scan,
When clearly there should be but one ;
For at his wedding, well he knew,
He had not madly married two :
He was not just the sort of man
To venture two instead of one.
Like others, he might take a fling,
And do, like them, some foolish thing ;
But none would find he was the goose,
To take two wives to keep his house.

Whene'er JOHN's vision doubled thus,
And led him on to count by *plus*,
He thought he saw a thing as bad,
Which was, more children than he had :
And then he swore that his poor life
Was tried by an unfaithful wife ;
So that for more he had to sweat,
Than appertained to his estate ;
Which was a thing, he said, no smith
Would like to be tormented with.

The sights thus seen were like those evils
Which drink engenders, called “blue devils :”

And when conceptions such as these
Possessed his brain, then he would seize
The tongs, or poker, and begin
To raise a most confounding din,
By thumping on the stools and chairs,
And pulverising crockery wares :
Whilst swearing, too, that he would be
A mighty fool, were he to see
Such awful things about his house,
And not correct the vile abuse.

Next he would rage, and stamp, and storm,
And swear that there must be reform ;
And that, too, of no common kind,
As certain folks would clearly find.
He was not such a stupid man,
As think the right reforming plan
Did not begin, as all should see,
With one's own self and family :
Whatever else might need his cares,
He'd first put right his home affairs ;
So that he would, of his own will,
Bring in at once a sweeping bill—
A bill which could not fail to please'm,
For it would sweep like a new besom ;

And on't he wouldn't be outvoted,
As he would not be petticoated.

It ne'er would do for him to be
Thus left in a minority,
For that would make him leave his bin,
And then the tories would get in ;
And his would be a luckless life,
If governed by a tory wife.
It ne'er should be his hapless lot,
To brook a tory petticoat ;
For there should ne'er in his abode
Be found, a tory Mrs. TODD.
If people chose they might him call
A demagogue, or radical ;
But tory tricks and tory slights,
Should ne'er deprive him of his rights.
He very soon would make it plain
That none should rule in his domain ;
For he would never give consent
To petticoating government.
Such things he heard of now and then
As abdicating hen-pecked men ;
But that was what no one should see
In him, whilst he had dignity :

And if he thus maintained his place,
No sinner would, as to his case,
Set up his gab, and say in course,
“The gray mare was the better horse.”

It appertained to his estate
To make laws, or to legislate,
For it was man’s part, and not woman’s, -
To act as “king, and lords, and commons.”
Thus he would show in his abode,
That he himself was Mr. TODD ;
And were a man in’t that he doubted,
He soon would have the fellow outed,
For he was just the kind of smith
No man could safely meddle with.
Like any other man of sense,
He did not readily take offence ;
But still no one should take or give,
Or trench on his prerogative ;
Else very soon he’d make it clear ;
“They had the wrong sow by the ear.”
He had as much of self-respect,
As must from scorn his name protect ;
And whilst none would permitted be
To tamper with his dignity,



"The noise was heard throughout the town;
And folks would say, with wink and nod,
'Those are the strokes of Mr. Todd.'"
— PAGE 29.

He ne'er would be the silly elf,
To make a blockhead of himself.
He had his mission—that was plain,
And it required him to maintain,
In all its breadth and length of stature,
The dignity of human nature.

He was no upstart in his trade,
But was a smith both born and bred ;
For he could make it very plain,
He had come down from Tubal-cain,
Who was the first and greatest smith,
That Adam's sons were favoured with.
As for himself, he graced his sire,
Both at the bellows and the fire ;
For at his forge he showed more pith
Than any other living smith :
When with his hammer he came down,
The noise was heard throughout the town ;
And folks would say, with wink and nod,
Those are the strokes of Mr. TODD.

When such like nonsense JOHN had said,
He'd whirl the poker round his head,
Or by it scatter in his ire,
The coals that burned upon the fire ;

Then holding it, like sword in hand,
Would say, By this I give command :
With this my subjects I will school,
And make them feel my lordly rule.
This is my sceptre and my baton,
Whilst like a king I'll keep my hat on ;
And I expect that all my own,
Will reverence me upon my throne.

Whilst in this way JOHN magnified
Himself, and each one else defied,
And pleased his ear with speechifying,
His family might all be crying ;
For wife and children grieved to see
The father of a family,
Sunk thus from influential station,
To one of brutish degradation ;
They grieved to see parental rule,
Thus wielded by a drunken fool,
Who was more fit for madhouse life,
Than live with children and with wife.
They grieved to think that one who should
Have studied how to do them good,
Was, for the sake of damning drink,
Fast driving them to ruin's brink ;

They grieved, in fear they might be made
Right soon to beg their daily bread,
And, driven by drink from their own door,
Be classed among the parish poor ;
They grieved to think that, they might be
Soon brought to live on charity,
When he who was their earthly head,
Far more than e'en providing bread,
Should also, by industrious pains,
Have for his household sought for gains
Which, well applied, could scarcely fail
To raise them in the social scale ;
And give them thus a chance to rise
Both in their own and others' eyes.

Still more of grief there might have been,
Had ills still worse been clearly seen ;
For whilst the father should have given
Such lessons, as might guide to heaven,
He trod the fearful downward path,
Which leads to everlasting death ;
And for his family raised no voice,
To urge them to a better choice.
No altar in the house was raised ;
No GOD or SAVIOUR there was praised ;

No song of Zion there was sung ;
No prayer led by a father's tongue ;
No reading of the sacred Word ;
No guidance sought from heaven's record ;
No pious, patriarchal sway,
Or pointing out the upward way ;
No sounds which with the righteous be -
The sounds of joy and melody,
But sounds of sobbing, sounds of sighing,
Sounds from wife and children crying ;
For whilst the father roared and curst,
Their hearts were often like to burst,
And down their cheeks, all pale and wan,
The tears of sorrow quickly ran.

But JOHN on this, the while, could look,
And yet experience no rebuke ;
For in his cups he did not feel—
His heart was then a heart of steel ;
And e'en when sober, one may guess,
It could not have been greatly less,
Else on his household, it is plain,
He had inflicted less of pain.

Alas ! alas ! what ills in life
Befall the hapless drunkard's wife !

Alas ! alas ! what ills beside,
His hapless offspring oft betide !
Their cups are filled with bitter things,
Their hearts with sighs and sorrowings :
Full to the brim with deep distress,
They live and die in wretchedness.

But let us not, withal, forget
The woeful fact—more dismal yet—
That wives there be, as well as men,
Who take to tippling now and then ;
And whilst they thus destroy their fame,
On kindred oft bring burning shame.
How we should treat our JANE, or MOLL,
If thus she took to alcohol,
Is more, perhaps, than one could say,
Till there might come the trial day ;
For not a little might depend,
On promise made to try and mend ;
But all at last would end in storm,
If not prevented by reform.
If in good time she did not smash
Her bottles, and her smuggling quash,
And manifest determination
To rectify, and keep her station,

So as to act the loving wife,
With all desire to hinder strife,
Then duty might compel to say
That such, or such, was marching day.

In righteousness and wrath we scowl,
At all who swill the drunkard's bowl.
Whate'er their sex, whate'er their place,
On all alike it brings disgrace,
And fits them more for lonely dens,
Or domiciles in cattle pens,
Than social life amidst their kin,
When, by indulgence in such sin,
That life, with all its sacred ties,
They so profane, and so despise.
Nor do they always sink alone ;
For oft the dearest of their own
Are led, by sufferings which they bear,
To forfeit life in wild despair ;
Whilst oftener still the bloated sots
Make free, at last, with their own throats,
And from their present hell of woe,
Make haste to reach their hell below :
And, ending thus their days in shame,
Leave friends averse to hear their name.

Though thus at times we moralise,
We don't, withal, the tale capsize ;
But only let it take a rest,
Till some few thoughts we thus suggest,
Which readers might not hap to find
Got otherwise into their mind.
If any, therefore, who peruse
The tale, get thus some useful views,
They'll grudge the less, though they don't read
The tale itself at railway speed.

As for such stops as try their patience,
Let them conceive they're railway stations,
Where halts, or pauses, must be made,
To serve the proper ends of trade.
A passenger that is in haste,
May think the stop much time doth waste ;
But off the engine goes in time,
And so does our narrating rhyme ;
For now we leave our present station,
That we may recommence narration,
And by this means we bring our train
Upon the proper line again.

III.

TODD'S TAVERN-SUN BECOMES NEBULOUS.

WHEN last we parted with our smith,
We left him in contention with
A host of ills, his fuddled brain
Had conjured up to give him pain.
These made him rave, and curse, and ban,
As if he were an injured man ;
And had been made by folks his own,
Poor, helpless, hapless, luckless JOHN :
Though all his real and fancied ills
Sprung from his beastly, drunken swills.

Whilst at his door there lay the fault,
Of gulping liquids drawn from malt,
'Tis fit to say that he was made
No better by the tavern jade,
Within whose den he often sat,
And drank, and sang, and smoked, and spat,
For by her glib and glossy tongue,
Which, like her bells, too much was rung,

She managed, with the greatest ease,
All simpletons like JOHN to please,
Who thought, in simple, idiot blindness,
That all her acts of seeming kindness,
Proceeded from what, to the end,
Would make her prove their greatest friend.
Poor JOHN, alas ! caught in this gin,
Indulged more freely in the sin,
Of spending in her tippling house,
What should have gone to better use.

But alehouse friendships can't hold fast—
As TODD himself could tell at last ;
For what of these fell to his lot,
Burst in a storm, and “ went to pot.”
When this unlooked-for twist took place,
JOHN TODD was in a woeful case ;
And all the more so, as the wonder
Came on him like a clap of thunder.
The rupture, still, was worth its pay,
For it wrought marvels in its way ;
And was to him, it may be said,
Worth something more than e'en he paid ;
And from this point, in regular form,
We'll pave the way to reach the storm.

Todd's tippling habits spoiled the trade,
By which he gained his daily bread,
And thus his wife and children were
Half starved, for want of proper fare.
With this there came another want,
For clothing, too, grew very scant;
And what there was showed JOHN was needy,
For all was very bare and seedy.
So fared it, too, with household gear,
Where all gave proof of "tear and wear."
The furniture, as well as dress,
Was breaking up and getting less.
Some broken stools, some broken chairs,
Some ugly cracks in crockery wares,
Some broken pots and broken pans,
Some broken cups and broken cans;
Some patchings here, some patchings there,
And nothing sound seen anywhere:
The besom, eke, was but a stump,
For it was, too, worn to the rump.
All things around and in the dwelling,
Reproachful tales on JOHN were telling;
And yet, though things grew daily worse,
He still pursued his boosing course;

For still he drank, and cursed, and swore,
As much as he had done before.
He still affirmed that he had got
Some burning sparks within his throat ;
Whilst colic, too, his old complaint,
Like rainy weather, came and went ;
So that he kept each old excuse,
For visiting the public house.

Whilst TODD was pushing hard his wits
In these apologising fits,
And struggling thus to smooth his sin,
For visiting so much the inn,
He said that oft when he went there,
It was to please some customer,
Who wished to treat him to a gill,
When paying his account or bill ;
Whilst it was, too, a usual way,
In taking up, or giving pay,
It would not do for him to try,
The thing, if wrong, to rectify,
For he might thereby give offence,
To those from whom he gained his pence ;
Nor would he be so mean a man,
So far to worship Number One,

As take a drink from any brother,
And not in turn give him another.

In days gone by, when in his purse
There were some coins he could disburse,
And when he could—as people say—
“Clear off his score,” or pay his way ;
Then, if determined to look big,
And visit inns to swill and swig,
There was the less to check his pride ;
But now he spoke somewhat too wide,
When he could not, from want of clink,
Pay for his meat, much less for drink.
Besides, from having less to spend,
The landlady was less his friend ;
With cracks she was not half so free
As formerly she used to be ;
Although a scuttling, active hussy,
She was not by a tenth so fussy,
Her tippling tankards to produce,
When JOHN had sneaked into her house.
We say he *sneaked*, and tell the truth,
For JOHN was now much “down-a-mouth,”
And could not go so boldly in
As once he did, and raise such din.

It was not now, as it was once,
When, with a stately step or prance,
He entered by the tavern door,
And trode across its parlour floor,
As if he meant his very feet
Should tell he could the reckoning meet :
All this, and more, he made them tell,
Which saved the ringing of the bell ;
For they gave warning he was in,
And could at once his work begin,
If any of the tavern-gents
Would bring the proper implements.

"Twas thus, when JOHN possessed a purse,
He could pursue a stately course ;
But now, when he had less of tin,
His feet somehow made less of din,
And did not by their noise demand,
If any body were at hand,
To quickly come, and give the smith
Some stuff to wet his throttle with ;
For just as if he walked on eggs,
Or feared that he might break his legs,
He quietly moved, without a beat,
Till he had moved into a seat ;

And then he looked as if in doubt,
He might be quickly ordered out.

That thus he felt was no way strange,
Since he perceived there was a change
In all the alewife's latter doings,
For they did not involve the wooings
He had been long accustomed to,
When TODD the smith was well to do.
There was not now such buzz or bustle,
When he went in to wet his whistle—
Less running here, less running there,
To fetch JOHN TODD an easy chair ;
Less noise from boisterous ha-ha-ha's !
And shaking JOHNNY by the paws ;
Less asking for the little TODDS,
His wife, with other ends and odds ;
Less hastening to the fire in turn,
To poke it up and make it burn ;
Less haste to give the table wipes,
And place on it tobacco pipes,
Or, with a further view to coax,
Replacing next the spitting box ;
Less haste (though JOHN was fairly in)
The proper business to begin,

By pouring from her private bottle,
A little drop to wet his throttle;
Less running to the cooking pot,
To get a sip of something hot,
And thus prepare the stupid gommach
For something hotter for the stomach.

'Twas thus that things had come of late,
To be in a transition state,
And such transition as to show
That *now* he was not "all the go."
Things which of yore had shone most bright,
Were darkening fast and threatening night.
The tavern-sun, that is to say,
The alewife's face, was giving way,
And was, as to her olden guest,
Declining far into the west.
The sky was putting on a frown,
The mercury was coming down;
Where once there was a clear horizon,
Dark, gloomy clouds began to rise on;
And these things, taken all in all,
Gave proof there soon might be a squall.

The sun aforesaid, which had shone
In former days so bright on JOHN,

But which, so different from the past,
Was getting so much overcast,
To hide the change was not inclined,
For Mrs. ALEWIFE showed a mind,
To raise in him some kind of tiff,
By saying things right pert and stiff,
As if she wished he might some day,
Just take the pet and sheer away ;
For she saw now he was a booser,
By whom she might become a loser.
With this she deftly set her lips,
To pepper him with squibs and quips,
Or any kind of pointed thing,
Which had a chance to make him fling.

Howe'er, it was with small result
She plied her taunting catapult ;
For JOHN, by drinking at her inn,
Had got so hard and thick a skin,
That it was like—and to his loss—
The skin of a rhinoceros ;
So that with stoic nonchalance,
He could afford her any chance,
Of touching him in any part,
By dealing in the gibing art.

Though thus it was, she jogged away,
And just as minded had her say ;
But laboured most of all to get
The smith put right about his debt ;
And oft great lectures on him thrust,
About the sin of drink on trust.
Yes ! truly that was what she did !
And when she did it shook her head,
For well she knew it needed pith
To hammer *that* into the smith !

But this, had TODD not lost all sense,
He might have called pure impudence ;
For why it was he could not get
Himself kept out of people's debt,
Was from his being ruined by
His drinking in her drinking sty,
Where little she had left undone,
To make him spend what he had won.
A pretty story 'twas, indeed !
For her to raise her gab, and read
To him, or any other gent,
A lecture on the money spent
In spirit-drinking, when the sin
Was that for which she kept her inn ;

So that when drinkers paid their score,
She liked their sinning more and more!
A moral lecture from the jade,
Was out of place with madam's trade.
When drinkers were supplied with tin,
She did not think about their sin;
But otherwise, if they got bare
Like JOHN, that alter'd the affair;
And then, when thus her *moral* sense
Led her to fear some loss of pence,
She read to those in lack of dust,
Her famous lectures upon trust;
And these she gave with special pith,
When she was lecturing to the smith.

She said a tradesman ne'er should get
Into that ugly thing called debt;
For if he did, 'twas all but plain,
He might not soon get out again.
More specially it was her thought,
That men who ales and spirits bought,
Should ne'er indulge the scurvy trick
Of getting them on trust, or tick;
For it was seen they oft forgot
To come again and pay their shot.

Besides, a law absurdly made,
And hampering much the spirit trade,
Did not permit one to pursue
A tradesman for a gill or two.
A law like that in this great nation,
Said little for its legislation ;
For in her view it seemed the way,
To make men drink who could not pay.

As JOHN had gone to get her drink,
And not her lectures, he might think,
That very little would be got
On that occasion for his throat ;
But when her lecture reached its end,
She'd say that, as an ancient friend,
She was inclined to trust him yet,
Since she had shown the ills of debt,
And she was always in the mood,
To try her best to do him good.

All debts for drink she took it on her,
To say were clearly debts of honour ;
And honour's debts should first be paid,
As every man of honour said.
She oft had said, and said so still,
A baker's or a grocer's bill,

Could be delayed with less of sin,
Than one contracted at an inn.
This principle she hoped that JOHN
Would do his best to act upon ;
For it was one which in good sooth
She thought was nigh a Bible truth.
She was not much inclined to preach,
But still this point was one, on which
She thought some good things could be said,
Although not in a pulpit made.

A preaching ale-wife's no anomaly ;
But in our view, the homily,
Or sermon, is a kind of speech
That ale-wives should not try to preach ;
For since they often poison vermin,
Some poison might be in the sermon ;
And so their silence we would choose,
Lest they put forth erroneous views ;
And hence the ale-wife now on hand,
For that alone we would disband ;—
But at this point we change our tack,
That to JOHN TODD we may go back.

IV.

TODD IS OVERTAKEN BY A TAVERN-TEMPEST.

ON one occasion it fell out,
When JOHN had closed a drinking bout,
That as he could not walk alone,
Whilst timeous hours besides were gone,
He was allowed a sleeping berth,
Upon the kitchen floor or hearth,
Where, with some cats and dogs, he might
Contrive somehow to spend the night ;
And he was fitter far to be
With them, than better company.
Though saying so, we won't decry
The beasts of this menagerie ;
As if we held that cats and dogs
Were not disgraced, if drunken hogs
Were made at inns, or anywhere,
Their bed, or yet their board to share.
These quadrupeds we would not put
Below that kind of two-legged brute,

Who is so low and lost to shame,
And careless of fair honest fame,
That he can leave his home and hall,
His wife, his offspring, one and all,
To drink and deal in other wrongs,
And sing his bacchanalian songs—
To howl in tune for asses' ears,
His frantic, bacchanalian cheers ;
And then, when ends the mad carouse,
Perchance he leaves his tippling house,
To wander from his proper path,
And die, unseen, a drunkard's death.

Is that the man that's fit to be
For dogs and cats good company ?
Is that the man whom one would slip
Among them for companionship ?
No, no ! we would not thus on them
Attempt to put such scorn and shame !
We would not e'en their carcass doom
To lie within the fellow's tomb.
We would not have them e'en to rot
With such a low, degraded sot :
Their name and credit we would save,
By giving them a better grave.

Why! cats are cleanly in their natures,
But drunkards, hoggish, dirty creatures—
The first will not e'en step on sputters,
The last oft roll themselves in gutters.
The first won't soil their very skin,
The last are nasty out and in.
When—looking to the kitchen hearth,
Where TODD had got a sleeping berth—
We say if there had been offence,
The brutes, had they possessed the sense,
Might in a huff have ta'en the road,
Because thus bedded with JOHN TODD,
And sought some place where they might be
Put up with nicer company.

We must do justice in the case,
And hence it is that we must place,
In order to give all their due,
The *four*-legged brutes before the *two*,
And say that decent cats and dogs,
Are decenter than tippling hogs.
And therefore whilst the tavern hearth,
Was thus to JOHN a sleeping berth,
He was a more degraded wight,
Than brutes with which he spent the night.

In character they suffered not ;
It was not so with JOHN the sot ;
But could they have been made aware,
Who thus lay down their bed to share,
We need not for a moment doubt,
They soon had turned the fellow out,
So that their skin might not be soiled,
Nor yet their reputation spoiled.
Yes, they had taught him very soon,
To change his snoring, drunken tune,
And pack to where he less would be
Disgusting to his company.

Howe'er, from ignorance of the case,
No quarrelling in their bed took place,
So that JOHN TODD was let alone,
As if the bed had been his own.
When morning came he was aroused,
And found that he had been well boused ;
Whilst he gave hints, and who could doubt 'm,
That everything was wrong about 'm.
So here came payment for his guzzle,
But next he had to solve the puzzle—
Could he, when in a case so odd,
At once go home to Mrs. TODD ?

Could he go home, and show his snout,
Just after such a drinking bout?
Could he go home in such a case,
And look his children in the face?
Could he go home in chance to meet
Upbraiding looks e'en in the street?
All these were questions much too nice,
To be disposed of in a trice;
And so, to let some time expire,
He sat down by the kitchen fire,
Where to reflection he could tend,
And give his stomach time to mend;
But still, with no great wish, he might
Ask conscience to put matters right.

Whilst occupying this position,
A cooking pot in ebullition
Gave him a call to stir 't about,
Lest its contents should all run out;
For o'er the brim the liquid matter,
Was running like a stream of water.
When JOHN was stemming this abuse,
In came the mistress of the house—
His very dear, beloved friend,
And sure to be so to the end,

Who in a stern, indignant tone,
Cried, "TODD, I say, let that alone :
You dirty beast, you drunken sot ;
Go home and stir your own broth-pot."

This startling peal of ale-wife thunder,
Made John look wide and wild in wonder,
And eke to feel as much tongue-tied,
As if he had been petrified.

What first to do, what first to say—
To speak at all, or haste away—
Went all at once in o his brain,
And just as soon went out again.
But forthwith, in a towering pet,
He seized his hat and off he set,
With burning looks which bore more ire
Than ever did his smithy fire ;
And swearing hard, he never more
Would darken the "old besom's" door.
In confirmation of his wrath—
Thus boiling—in his onward path
He eyed, and with most furious kicks,
A spirit keg drove all to sticks,
With taunting promise he would pay
The loss, if e'er he went that way.



——“TODD, I say, let that alone.
You dirty beast, you drunken sot;
Go home and stir your own broth-pot.”—PAGE 54.

As soon as thus he had "cleared out,"
There came a meditation bout,
And sighing to himself he said,
As on his way he homeward made,
"Is this the way I'm treated *now*,
By that old drunkard-making sow?
Is this the way her friendship ends
With those she flatters as her friends?
Must I be paid with such abuse,
For what I've spent within her house?
Have I for that supplied her tills,
And paid her nasty tavern bills?
Was it for that I left my forge,
To go to her to drink and gorge?
And in my aiding her and hers,
Lose more than half my customers?
And she, forsooth, to taunt JOHN TODD,
And bid him leave her *nice* abode!
Aye! call him, too, 'a dirty beast!'
Ungrateful hag! for she at least,
Might on that subject hold her thumb,
And try to sing a little dumb;
For if I'm dirty she might think,
I'm dirty from her dirty drink.

As long as I could pay my score,
She had for me an open door :
But when at last the slut believes,
That I am far ' out at the sleeves,'
She knows that with her scowl and scoff,
She can more cheaply drive me off.
She knows that she the best has got
From her said ' dirty beast and sot.'
She knows that she has drawn the pith,
And something more, out of her smith ;
And then at once sends to the road
Her well-beloved Mr. TODD !
But Mr. TODD—now Mr. Sot,
And Mr. Dirtybeast—has got
A lesson that may be of use ;
For though he has been long a goose,
He'll maybe some day make it plain,
He has become a man again ;
And if that point he e'er should reach,
He knows some lessons he will teach.

“ She scorns me for my lack of pence:
I scorn myself for lack of sense ;
For had it been that I had got
A little more, then ' drunken sot,'

Or 'dirty beast,' had ne'er been rung
By hers, or any alewife's tongue.
And I had ne'er increased my sins,
By spending money at their inns.
I might have learned, had I but thought,
That alewives' friendship must be bought ;
So that what kindly things they say,
Are, like their spirits, meant *to pay*.
Their flattery is meant to aid
The interests of their poisoning trade.
Then what a fool was I to think
It was myself, and not her drink,
That most was running in her head,
When kindly things she said or did ;
But since I've found the secret out,
And seen what she has been about,
I'm safe to say it will be odd,
If any more she cheat JOHN TODD.

“I've done with madam and her inn—
Her brandies, porters, ales, and gin ;
For if again I ever venture,
Within her drinking den to enter,
She'll catch the truth if she shall gather,
That I am there from stress of weather ;

And more she'll know if I forbear
Frequenting taverns anywhere.

“Confound her porter and her ale ;
I wish them sour, and dead, or stale,
And undergoing hasty packing
To manufacture good shoe-blackening.
Confound her cognacs and her rums,
Her cordials spiced with cardamoms ;
Confound her private bottle drams,
With all her other bribing shams ;
Confound her brandies and her gins,
With all the bottles in her bins.
May all her casks of Highland whisky
Get foundered in the Bay of Biscay ;
May all her glasses crack and crash,
And all her hogsheads go to smash ;
May her old sign of ‘The Crosskeys’
Be set afloat to cross the seas ;
And then the cant which it enforces—
‘Refreshments here for men and horses’—
Will lead no beetleheads astray
Who chance to meet it on its way.

“Now, Madam Crosskeys, that’s my blessing,
And you are welcome to the dressing,

With more besides at any pinch,
For I could maul you every inch !
And yet there is one thing at least
I owe you, though I'm 'dirty beast :'
For you have given me one advice,
That you'll not need to give me twice.
'Go home,' you say, 'you drunken sot ;
Go home and stir your own broth-pot.'

"Well, madam, *that* I'll keep in view,
Yes ! Madam Crosskeys, *that* I'll do.
Though as for thanks for the advice,
I guess I need not be too nice ;
For it must not be understood
You meant thereby to do me good.
You'll scarcely say you wish all sots
Would let alone your precious pots ;
Though maybe in the end you'll find,
There is one sot who's of that mind.

"Had I been less with you, good-wife,
And known much less of tavern life ;
Had I been less within your doors,
And kept the pence which paid your scores ;
Had I but led a temp'rate life,
And kept at home with my own wife ;

Had I more with my children been,
And less with drunken comrades seen;
Had I kept home and timeous hours,
And stirred *my* pots instead of *yours*,
I had not been the stupid ass
To bring myself to such a pass;—
But just as sure's my name is TODD,
And that I'm walking on this road,
I'll take the hint which I have got,
And henceforth stir my own broth-pot.
I'll go no more to any inn,
To perpetrate the heinous sin,
Of stirring pots in reckless wrong,
Which to myself do not belong.
'Tis true enough I'm down the hill,
But I have climbing virtues still,
And better to make use of these,
Than act the swine at 'The Crosskeys.'

“ My poverty now presses hard,
But poverty's my just reward;
For all its ills come in the pay
Of what I've madly thrown away;
And nigh I might in black despair
Sink under ills so ill to bear.

But fate so black I won't forecast,
Much as I'm paying for the past ;
The ills I bear I won't make worse,
In braving an eternal curse.
All is not lost—all is not gone,
For there are pots which still I own ;
And these I'll stir, that so my wife
And children may be kept in life.
Yes ! these I'll stir, and let alone
Some pots which other people own.
Yes ! I'll let Goody Crosskeys know,
That what at length I've taken in tow,
Is that of proving there are sots,
Who *stir at last their own broth-pots.*"



V.

TODD TURNS TEMPERATE AND PROSPERS.

It was with musings such as these,
TODD turned his back on "The Crosskeys,"
Resolving he would make the storm
Of lady Crosskeys yield reform :
And though the thought came in a pet,
'Twas one that he did not forget.

With diligence he plied his trade,
And no more tavern visits made ;
And not content with throwing off
His drunken chums, with all their scoff,
He gave to them what he had got—
Advice to stir their own broth-pot.
No more were heard his old excuses
For visiting the public-houses ;
But turning tail on one and all,
Showed each was quite apocryphal.
Hence burning sparks could not be got,
As formerly, within his throat ;

Nor was he now so much afraid,
That perspirations at his trade,
Might need from him, to hinder harm,
A sniff of something stiff and warm ;
For health he found was quite secure
With something like a water-cure ;
For than good water e'en the smithy
Required no drink a whit more pithy.
It might seem strange, yet he could tell
That water from a good pump well,
Was all that he required to take,
When he had need his thirst to slake ;
And never since he was a smith
Had he so much of hammering pith.
Besides, those colics which before
Caused him such plague, came back no more :
But if they had, then, as deserved,
He had them doubtless rightly served,
By sending them adrift, like colics
Which don't insist on alcoholics.

But justice needs it should be said,
The resolution JOHN had made,
To stir henceforth his own broth-pot,
Was what kept sparks out of his throat ;

And this, too, made him quite as sure
That, should there come some gripes to cure,
Things could be got which were less risky,
Than dosing drams of blackguard whisky.
In short, he had resolved his throttle,
Should henceforth deal in pure "teetotal,"
Believing that by this 'twas plain,
He might become a man again ;
And to his children, self, and wife,
Bring credit for the rest of life.
He felt he might recover still,
If steadily he climbed the hill ;
And if its summit he should reach,
He knew that from it he could preach
A sermon which might little please,
The witch that kept the old "Crosskeys,"
For it would show what could be got
By one who stirred his own brothpot.

'Twas with such thoughts TODD took a start,
To execute a wise man's part ;
And no long time elapsed, before
He saw prosperity once more
Begin on him and his to smile,
And render light his daily toil.

The family food which once was scant,
Now showed the pantry did not want :
And forms once very lank and pale,
Now could be seen quite plump and hale ;
Whilst those who were at pains to scan
What now was on the outer man,
Saw clothing which must have been got
By folks who stirred their own broth-pot.

But there was still another sight,
Which proved that things were going right ;
And had it not been in the bill,
There had been something wanting still.
The family recognised the claim
Of every Sabbath as it came,
And therefore on each Sabbath were
Attendants at the house of prayer.
Whilst less like hell, their own abode
Was now more like the house of God—
A very Bethel in its way,
And *thus* made use of every day ;
For there the voice of prayer was raised,
And there God's holy name was praised :
So that, for strife and drunken riot,
There reigned, instead, celestial quiet.

The parents and the children strove
To bless each other with their love ;
And seeking more than their own good,
They sought to bless the neighbourhood ;
That ills which ill example did,
Might now by good be cured or hid.

Whilst things went thus it chanc'd one day,
That JOHN and wife went out to pay
A visit to a friend or two,
As folks genteeler often do ;
And for that purpose they were drest
In what they held as nigh their best,
But nathless dressed with that discretion,
Which well comported with their station :
In clothing thus they kept their place,
For e'en in this they saw a grace ;
And by such prudence did not make
Their children, in their garments take
The party guise of embryo flunkeys,
Or what might fit a showman's monkeys.
What they could spare of hard-earned cash,
They did not waste in gorgeous trash,
To make their children like buffoons,
Or harlequins and pantaloons.

For when of cash they had some more
Than was required to pay their score,
In watchfulness t' improve their rank,
They put it in the "Savings' Bank ;"
And, gathering interest, there it lay
To help them in a rainy day.

But whilst it was they exercised
This wisdom, and economised,
They did not, for the sake of hoarding,
Encroach on either clothes or boarding,
Or yet on aught which ought to be
Found with a tradesman's family.
In no respect did John and wife
Indulge in mere ascetic life ;
For in due place, with their employment,
Were recreations and enjoyment,
And such as oft around the hearth
Created joy and harmless mirth.
Whilst thus they prospered in their ways,
They could afford their holidays,
And on their coming oft would spend
A while with some respected friend.

Well, as we had begun to say,
Dressed in good style, they went one day

To call upon a friend or two,
As greater folks are known to do ;
When, strange enough ! they chanc'd to meet,
In passing through a lane or street,
The blousy wife of "The Crosskeys,"
Who bawled out with her wonted ease,
" Bless me, JOHN TODD ! can this be you ?
Preserve me, man ! how do you do ?
And this, I reckon, is Mrs. TODD !
I hope you're well, ma'am ; now, how odd !
For just as sure as I am here,
And really, man ! it's very queer,
I dreamed about you both last night,
And here you are ! Well, what a sight !
I'm aye so happy when I meet
A friend, e'en in the very street,
Although much happier when *I sees*
Their merry looks at 'The Crosskeys.'
But dear me, JOHN ! and not to flatter,
I really never saw you fatter !
You're surely feeding on the best.
And then you're so genteelly drest !
You're like a man with an estate,
Or I might say a magistrate :

And maybe you may come to that,
With a gold chain and a cocked hat !
And Mrs. TODD ! for looks and dress,
I'm sure might be a mayoress.
But where, preserve me, have you been,
For now your face is never seen ?
What are you doing now at all,
So that you ne'er give me a call ?"

Whilst madam's tongue was at this race,
JOHN just kept staring in her face,
Resolved to let her have her swing
In all she meant to say or sing.
This gave him time to eye the lady,
And get his ammunition ready ;
For since she had come in his way,
He likewise had a word to say,
And wished before he said adieu,
To fire at her a word or two.

Hence when a pause at length was made,
He took his aim and tartly said :
" If I must tell you what I'm doing,
Or what the course is I'm pursuing,
I have no doubt from your concern
About me, you'll be glad to learn

I've ceased to be a 'drunken sot,'
And *stir besides my own broth-pot*,
Which brings more money and more ease,
Than stirring pots at 'The Crosskeys.'
Some other things I need not skip,
For I must tell your ladyship,
That since I ceased to drink with thee,
I've much improved my company ;
As now I neither swill with hogs,
Nor spend the night with cats and dogs,
Or take my sleep on tavern hearths
Instead of proper bedding berths.
And, madam, I can scarcely doubt
From what you've said of our 'turn out,'
You're well convinced that, at the least,
I am not now a 'dirty beast.'
'Twas only when your spirit kegs
Deprived me of my proper legs,
And made me try what I could do,
In using four instead of two,
That you, my lady, dared to put
On me the name of 'dirty brute.'
In dirt, at least, I ceased to sin
When I forswore your dirty inn ;

And cleanliness would not be less,
If there were less of drunkenness.
Good bye, and bid all other sots
Go home and stir their own broth-pots."

With this the TODDS were off and gone,
And Madam Crosskeys left alone,
And left to muse in dumps and dudgeon,
That JOHN withal was not the gudgeon
To be again hooked by her tongue,
However finely it were rung.

Of one thing she was sure at least,
That she had lost a dirty beast ;
But to prevent the loss of more,
She was resolved, and almost swore,
That she would ne'er to other sots
Give hints about their own broth-pots.
Already she had proof enough,
That if she did, they might in huff
Go home and stir them, e'en as JOHN,
And let her pewter pots alone.
She clearly saw that she had made
One sermon much against her trade ;
And that when she tried preaching next,
Broth-pots should not be made the text.

VI.

TODD TAKES IN TOW MORE THAN NUMBER ONE.

So, having sent her thus adrift,
The scene once more to TODD we shift,
And just to say a word or two,
Before we next bid him adieu.

Enough we've said to indicate
The happy tide in his estate,
When, from a host of pressing wants
Begot in lowly tavern haunts,
He rose so high in social life,
That all his children and his wife
Were, from the store he now possessed,
Both fitly fed and neatly dressed,
And with himself raised to a place
In circles which they well could grace.

Then who would say TODD might not see
Fulfilled the alewife's prophecy,
That from his better worldly state,
He might become a magistrate.

And were it so, it e'en might be,
That some might Madam Crosskeys see
Arraigned before him for some cause,
In fracture of the spirit laws ;
Whilst if she got (which would be odd)
A reprimand from Baillie TODD.
Or were by him for what she did,
A little while in limbo laid,
She thus would learn what could be got
From one who stirred his own broth-pot.

In short, what prize may still be won
By JOHN, before his course is run,
Is something more, we must confess,
Than we can hope to reach by guess.
But looking simply at the past,
We may infer he's hastening fast
To something in the social state,
The world calls dignified and great.
Progression such has been before,
And in his case may be once more.
Out of the depths of dissipation,
Men have advanced to lofty station,
When, having seen their evil ways,
They left them off to spend their days

In what, when fitly understood,
Deserves the name of great and good.
And since it is JOHN climbs the hill,
Should he go on and climb it still,
He may before his sun goes down,
Attain some place of much renown.

But ceasing to anticipate
His future, rather let us state
That, when last spoken of in our hearing,
He was not only still forbearing
The use of any bottled thing,
Which leads to drunken poisoning,
But was conferring special aid,
Whilst yet attentive to his trade,
In furthering means which may advance
The noble cause of temperance.

As one who once had loved his bottle,
But now the friend of pure "teetotal,"
He feels there is the greater need,
That for "teetotal" he should plead :
And thus, so far as this may run,
Repair the ills which he had done.
He feels 'tis well he has given up,
And e'en can curse the drunkard's cup :

But more than this, he feels he should
Try to do other drunkards good.

His mission—more than to reclaim
What he had lost, his own good name ;
His mission—more than e'en to curse
A system which destroys the purse,
The health, the body, and the soul,
And oft a family, all and whole ;
His mission—more than now to spend
His life in temperance to the end—
Involves his bidding other sots
Go home, and stir their own broth-pots ;
His mission tells him he must feel,
His shoulder should be at the wheel,
Which now is moving on its way
To bring about the happier day,
When, by the lessening of our inns,
There will be fewer drinking sins,
And when our liquor legislation,
Will bring less ruin on the nation.

His mission—precious in his eyes—
He advocates without disguise ;
And in the cause could face all sots
From far “Land’s End to John o’Groat’s.”

No laugh of theirs, no gibe, no flout,
Or taunt they use, puts JOHN about.
To all their scorning, one may say,
That he's like Meg to Duncan Gray ;
For to them all, so small's their plague,
He is "as deaf as Ailsa Craig."
In turn he has a gibe, or taunt,
To serve them with if that they want.
He holds his own, and bids all sots
Go home, and stir their own broth-pots.
When any drunkard tries in scoff
To bother JOHN, or take him off,
JOHN's first reply is, "Tell me, sir,
Have you got any pots to stir ;
For if you have you should go home,
And stir them for the time to come."

With moral courage thus replete,
He cannot from his ground be beat,
Or made to act in any way,
That would the cause mar or betray.
And there is still another thing,
Which may command our mentioning ;
And when we've done so, then forthwith
We'll for the present leave the smith.

Full of his aim, he oftentimes
When hammering iron, eke, hammers rhymes,
In hope that, by the power of verse,
He may with more effect rehearse
Some thoughts which may help t' advance
The present march of temperance ;
So that the land may witness less
Of deep degrading drunkenness.
From knowing that reforms sometimes
Have profited by humorous rhymes,
Which in their way have triumphs won,
That graver things might not have done,
He tries at times to aid his views,
By taking to the song or muse ;
And were it but to show the pith
Of poesy, that is in the smith,
We'll close our tale, as it most fit is,
With one of his best temperance ditties.



SONG,—*Tune*, “*For a’ that, and a’ that.*”

It’s wrong to say to any sot,
“Ye drunken brute,” and a’ that,
For brutes or beasts are never got
In drunkenness for a’ that.
For a’ that, and a’ that,
In drunkenness and a’ that ;
A brute’s more of a gentleman,
Though but a brute for a’ that.

He stumps about on his four legs,
And mumps his meat and a’ that,
But never thinks of spirit kegs,
Or porter butts and a’ that.
For a’ that, and a’ that,
Black porter butts and a’ that ;
He’s far more of a gentleman,
Though but a brute for a’ that.

When thirsty, then, like other folks,
He needs a drink and a’ that,
But nae companion can him coax,
From spirit taps to draw that.
For a’ that and a’ that,
When needing drink and a’ that,
He knows that water is the best,
Though but a brute for a’ that.

He's much more kindly to his kin,
And to himself, and a' that,
Than crawl to any dirty inn,
To fuddle there and a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
To fuddle there and a' that ;
He's far more of a gentleman,
Though but a brute for a' that.

His stomach's never out of sorts,
From boozing bouts and a' that,
And he is ne'er in police courts,
For kicks or clouts, and a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
For kicks and clouts, and a' that ;
He's far more of a gentleman,
Though but a brute for a' that.

He's never led to pawn his coat,
To go in rags, and a' that,
And so he's ne'er in beggar's lot,
From alcohol and a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
From alcohol and a' that ;
He's far more of a gentleman,
Though but a brute for a' that.

He never staggers home for strife,
To rant, and rave, and a' that ;
To kick up rows and vex his wife,
His little ones, and a' that.

For a' that, and a' that,
He's not so bad as a' that ;
He's far more of a gentleman,
Though but a brute for a' that.

Hence in defence of Mister Brute,
Whate'er his name, and a' that, . . .
We say he's better, out and out,
Than any sot, and a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
Than any sot, and a' that ;
He's far more of a gentleman,
Though but a brute for a' that.

Ye dirty, dozing, drinking crew,
Ye're worse than swine, and a' that :
Do swine, like you, lie down and spew,
And do far worse than a' that ?
Than a' that, and a' that,
And what is worse than a' that ;
Although you think that you are men,
You're no the thing for a' that.



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